

## INSTALLATION SPEECH

I owe deep thanks to Archbishop O'Brien, to Bishop Madden, and to Bishop Rozanski who released me from my former parish, for assigning me to this prestigious parish. The Church of the Immaculate Conception has, throughout the years, been considered to be a model and paradigm within this Archdiocese.

As many recall or know, I was assigned here as a young priest in 1982. I had the extraordinary privilege to serve under the leadership of Msgr. Jack Lyness and then Msgr. Ed Lynch, who taught me many of the values and skills that any priest must bring to his ministry to be successful. Msgr. Lynch taught me through his example of family pastoral care and sensitivity to each and every parishioner's needs.

In my subsequent assignments at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen and at Holy Family, I have carried forth both the lessons I have learned in my early years here and the traditions that contribute to make a Catholic Church truly an important parish.

During those intervening years since Msgr. Lynch retired the practice of excellent preaching, pastoral care, and community involvement were continued by Msgr. Denis Tinder.

It is my intention to combine these traditions, the exemplary care to the seventeen nursing facilities, senior residences, hospitals and the hospice care facility for which we are responsible, with the best ministry that I have learned and developed throughout my priesthood; and to do it in a manner which exemplifies the highly regarded outreach of this parish.

After my notification that I was to be your pastor, I had the opportunity for a few months to visit with the administration and school staff on my day off from Holy Family. As a result, I was able to learn a considerable amount regarding the operations of the church and school, and some of the difficulties that have developed since Msgr. Tinder's death. These visits to the parish office and individual classrooms, gave me the opportunity to become familiar with not only the staff but with the challenges and issues the parish now faces.

In my discussion with the Archbishop, Bishop Madden, Bishop Rozanski, and most particularly in the analysis of the parish profile produced by the Personnel Board, I determined that my ministry should initially focus on four areas.

First: What are the ministries of our parish that need strengthening; which need to be reevaluated for their relevance in the Catholic community; and most importantly my focus is on the activities that will revive and energize the spirit and traditions for which this Church is so well known.

Second: There is an extraordinary demand on this parish to provide pastoral care to the seventeen nursing care facilities, senior residences, hospitals and a forty bed hospice care facility. Unfortunately, the number of Catholic priests set aside for this ministry are not available. Because Immaculate has so aptly served these institutions with lay volunteers it is a priority of mine to train and to expand, with the help of the Associate Pastor, a "ministry of presence" with these people; especially to administer the sacrament of the anointing of the sick.

Third: Immaculate Conception is a large facility both in terms of membership and its buildings occupied and very valuable space in Towson. It is my observation however, that many of the buildings on this campus are either over or under utilized; and that many of the programs that I intend to implement are not able to function as they should! I would love to offer a Sunday speaker series, more youth programs and Adult Enrichment opportunities. I am particularly concerned about the way vehicles must be parked for each Mass and be removed as soon as possible so that there is adequate space for the next Mass.

Fourth: Bishop Madden has explicitly stated the need for Immaculate Conception, as well as those Catholic Churches along York Road, to work together in a unified fashion. In subsequent meetings with the other churches we have identified issues concerning: our schools, immigration, health care facilities and the implementation of the New Roman Missal, which we believe will meet the requirements of our bishop's request.

These issues and the operational concerns that I have, have lead me to the conclusion that an overall development Master Plan needs to be created with regard to both the church facility as well as our school. I will begin the process latter this fall to establish a developmental committee that will produce a Master Plan to address issues. In doing so, I will want as much input as possible from our congregation. Many committees will be formed and I will seek your input and assistance to achieve this goal.

In conclusion, I can only tell you what a deep honor it is to be your pastor. It is my intention to minister to you pastorally as well as to continue the traditions of this wonderful church.

This will be a challenging assignment and I ask your prayers to meet these goals. I welcome your comments and suggestions as we move forward.

I am very complemented by your presence here today, and I pledge my commitment to you as your pastor to move forward and to continue the legacy of the Church of the Immaculate Conception.